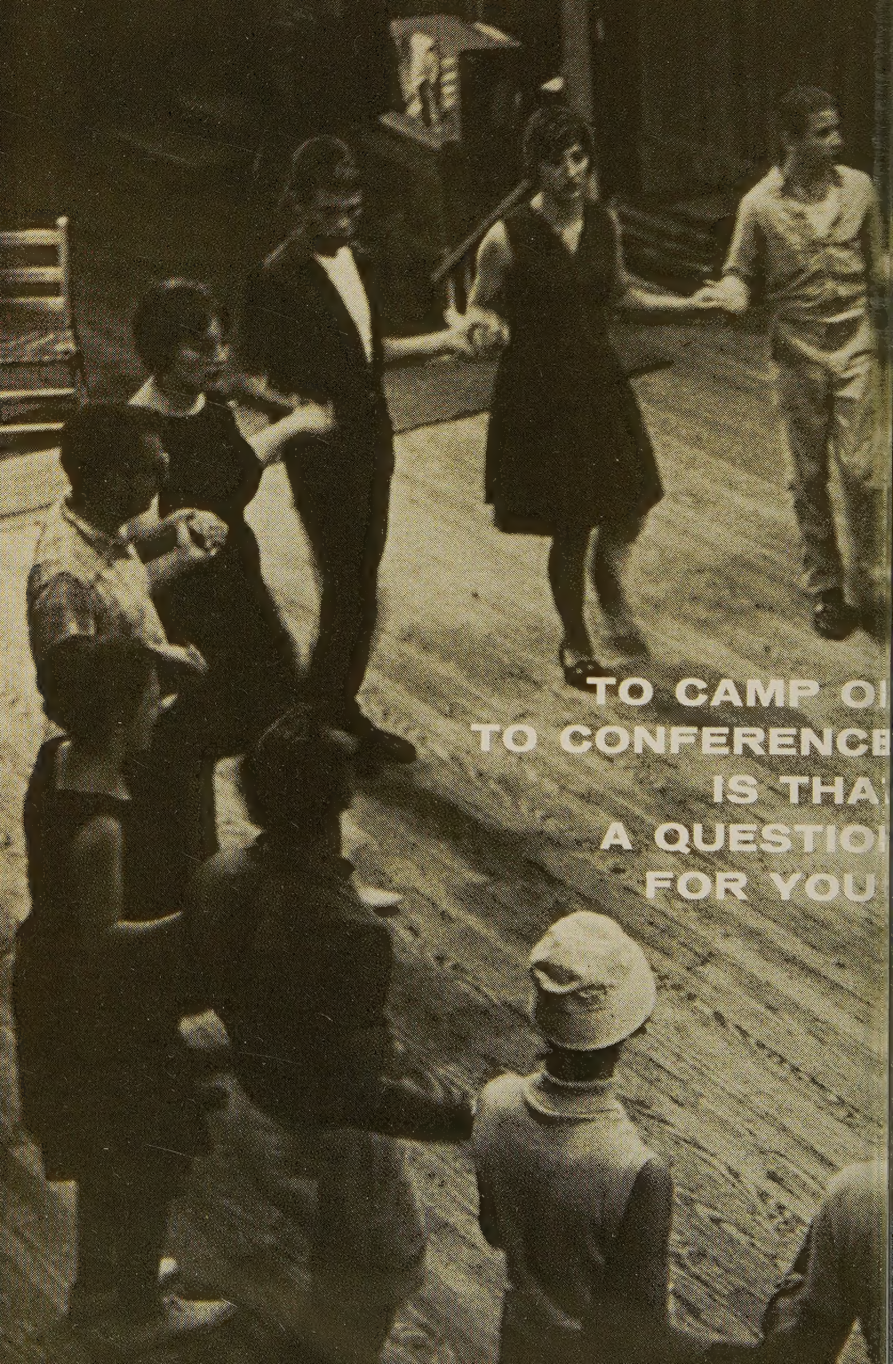




Youth

CANOEING TAKES A CERTAIN BREED
A PICKLE-PICKING LOVE FEAST
TURN TO THE HILLS TO CAMP



TO CAMP OR
TO CONFERENCE
IS THAT
A QUESTION
FOR YOU

OF ROBERT TULLY / If today is a beautiful afternoon, how about doing some social outdoor education and recreation research? Take a neighborhood hike and ask the kids you meet some research questions. Keep a record of their reactions. The first youth you meet ask: "Would you like to go camping this summer?" Then the next ask: "Would you like to go to a camp this summer?" Don't ask both questions of the same person, and keep your tone of enthusiasm the same. It might give a biased result.

I'll wager that to the first question you'll get a resounding series of, "Sure!" "You bet!" "Unhuh!" "Yes!" Nearly 90 per cent of the answers will be positive. To the second question you also will get one basic answer: "Which one?" "Which camp?"

The reason: Going *camping* is adventure! Fun! A challenge. Free to go, we all would like to try our hand at it. Even adults like to go camping. Going to a *camp* traditionally means participating in "a preestablished group program in line with the objectives of the sponsoring group." We want to be sure of the program and the leadership before commitment.

During the last few years the Christian church has been looking at the above differences and has been offering both types of program—camping and a camp—because they seem to meet the interests and needs of many persons regardless of age. And so the church is also asking: "Would you like to go camping?" or "Would you like to go to a camp?"

First, try this camper-conferee quiz: It might help you understand your interests. Check one of the three answers. Check "Maybe if," if you desire some specific conditions before you can mark "Yes" or "No."

1. Do I really like to explore the out-of-doors? Am I interested in the flora and the fauna? Does mother earth beckon me, invite me to explore her mysteries?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe if ☐

2. Do snakes, mosquitos, ants, etc., really "bug me"? Do I like animals in a zoo, not like to face on a trail or by my bed at night?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe if ☐

3. Do tall stately trees, steep hills, high mountains, challenge me? Call me to climb? Invite me to adventure?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe if ☐

4. Do I love to sit under a tree in the cool shade, sip a coke, chat with friends, and intellectually solve the world's problems, as I toss stones in the lake?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe if ☐

5. Am I challenged by hardship, walking, carrying heavy loads, carrying a pack, portaging a canoe, cooking meals on hot open fires?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe if ☐

6. Do I really want to feel equal to, rather than superior or inferior to, persons? Do I like to help people by working with them, eating with them, living with them, regardless of race, color, creed, or economic conditions? Am I willing to give of my time and money, even pay my own way for this experience?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe if ☐

7. Do I like to ponder and discuss far-out problems, share my own convictions, and lay out my ideas and solutions intellectually on my peers?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe if ☐

8. Do I like the beauty and inspiration of the out-of-doors, but care little to be too close to the "good earth"? Do I like my present recreation skills, sports, dancing, talking, etc., more than the fun of hiking, rock collecting, tree identification, etc.?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe if ☐

Youth/

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Cover photo by Paul Heffron.

Among persons v

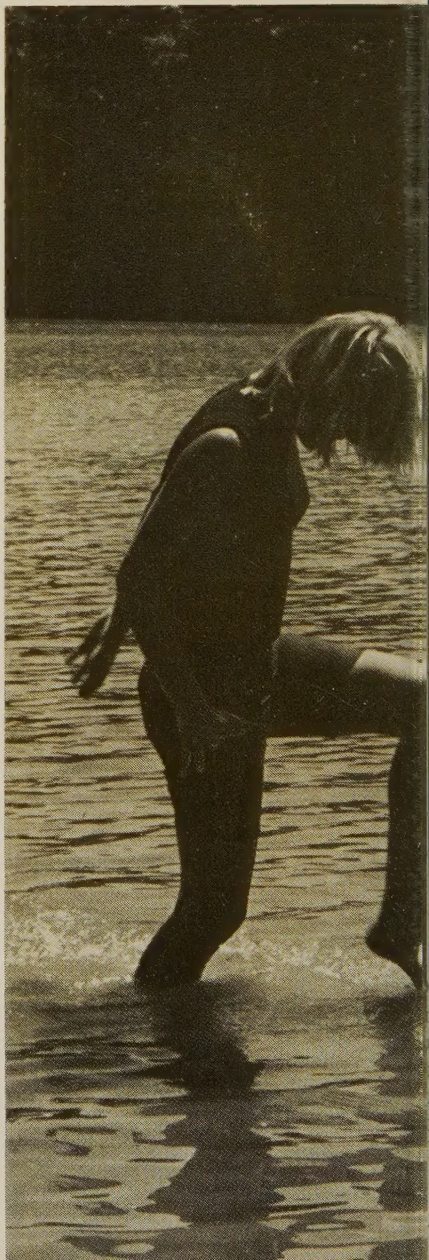


Photo by Paul Buck

re, we dare to learn more easily

If you gave a resounding "Yes" to 1-3-5-7 and an equally sounding "No" to 2-4-8, better go camping where you live in the out-of-doors. Take a trail-hike, or a canoe trip. You'll have a ball, and it will be worth your time and effort to get there.

If it was "Yes" to 2-4-7-8 and "No" to 1-3-5, select a good church camp-conference. It will be fun for you.

What did you do about 6? If you are really a "Yes" person here, and also at 7, you better investigate the work camp projects. You won't really be happy until you do.

If you checked "Maybe if" five or six times, and added your personal conditions, one of two causes of indecision might be your problem.

You may be filled with doubts about your own desires and purposes and want a little more time. Counseling helps. Check favorable conditions before you move. Then go in the direction where most of your conditions will be met. This will probably be at a conference in a camp setting.

Or, you're not quite sure of yourself as a person. You have honest doubts. Then, you ought to consider getting acquainted with the place and purpose of the whole universe by going camping.

There's something helpful about momentarily being away from home, away from life's rushed routines, and on our own to probe new worlds, to meet new people, and to get to know ourselves a little better—all among persons who care about us, about the world, and about God.

For such a search, nature is an ideal environment. Nature knows its place, its purpose. Nature's laws are sure, rough and cold at times but moving and creative most of the time. Behind it, through it, and sustaining it, is God. But don't be confused. Nature is not to be worshipped. Nature is not God, for God preceded nature. He created it. And, as in all things which God has created, we can learn in the out-of-doors of the creative process of the Creator. We come to know the joy of discovery, for we are the discoverers and users of God's creation, not its creators and masters. Out of such an encounter with people, with the world around us and with yourself can come a new understanding of why God needed to disclose himself and his love through a person.

Church camping and camps: The aim of the church is "to help you (your friends, your neighbors, and even your enemies) become aware of God's self-disclosure and seeking love in Jesus Christ" and "to help you respond in faith and love" to that love of God. And going to a conference, or to a camp, or just camping, is one of the ways to meet this aim—to become aware and to respond. Although the pattern of the past has been conferences in an outdoor setting, the churches are now adding a number of varying programs in varying settings. Let's look at several: Camping, Trail Hikes, Travel Camps, Camp-Conferences, and Work Camps.

In *camping*, the fun, adventure and learnings are built around living in

Away from home and on his own

the outdoors, experiencing nature, solving problems of food, shelter, and personal care. Challenged by the simplicity of living and inspired by the group fellowship and the beauty of nature around them, campers and counselors try to live their Christianity first in relation to each other, and then in the care and conservation of nature itself. The cycle of nature's interdependence, including man's place in the cycle, challenges those interested in belonging. This is biological ecology.

The great nature passages of the Bible come alive in this environment. Meaning deepens. Worship is at every personal turn of a trail. Corporate worship becomes natural, informal, creative, but penetrative. It seldom happens on a pre-determined schedule and with clerical dignity, but it does happen within the human dignity of being a sincere person sensing the need and presence of God. Leaders and campers strive to live sharing living tasks as Christians and within God's creation and are willing to discuss, program, and evaluate their progress toward common Christian living goals. The details of food selection, meal preparation, clean-up, shelter construction, and all camp chores will consume blocks of time, and cause problems of Christian sharing and living.

Trail hikes, canoe trips, etc. are camping excursions along a pre-planned physical trail. All that comes from camping can happen here. In addition, there are established disciplined goals of travel to meet. The sense of being out of circulation, being on your own, being self-sufficient, though still a bit fearful, the challenge in meeting the hiking and packing schedule, maintaining the physical discipline in meeting of the group-established travel or distance goals, has personal value to those who have the courage to face these challenges.

Travel camps usually provide a commercial means of transportation. But here again, the cooperative living together is emphasized. In addition, selected sites (cities, monuments, historic sites) along a pre-determined route are visited, studied, discussed, experienced. These become the emphasized education activities. History lives. The beauty of the country is experienced. New skills, new insights, not found at home, are often developed.

Conferences are generally held at an established camp or conference site. Generally, part of the day is spent in study and discussion, though there is plenty of time for play, relaxation, recreation, entertainment, and worship. Total strangers become close friends in a very short time.

In the conference program, the out-of-doors is used for inspiration and motivation, for sources of recreation and relaxation, and for some small group special interest study. Generally, in a conference, the out-of-doors becomes a setting, a change of environment, an inspiration for the purpose of the conference rather than a tool to be used in reaching the educational, recreational, and living goals of the conference.

Camper takes a fresh look at life

Work camps have been an activity of the church for many years now. Christians, seeing another person or group in need, have invited concerned persons to come and try to meet this need. The visiting work group takes care of their own living problems (food preparation, house cleaning, etc.). They cooperate with the persons-in-need in helping correct the problem or meet the need. The campers also study and discuss such items as the cause and cure of such problems and tensions as they are meeting. They plan their own recreational program. Total hours are long and hard, both in labor and in study. Religious expression is very practical—personal and corporate worship, scheduled by the campers as needed, becomes very real.

Maybe by now you're asking, "What's so Christian about church camping or going to a church conference? A Scout or private camp is fun and Christian too, isn't it?" That depends! The church-sponsored camp or conference has Christian living and Christian concepts as the *core* of its concern. Whether it achieves its aim depends on three interrelated factors: (1) What you as a camper bring to the setting. Are you willing to try to know the God of Jesus Christ and react by trying to live in the camping or conference setting in the light of your personal awareness of him? (2) What the leaders bring to the setting. Do they have an open willingness to be Christian, to learn and to share their experiences and understandings of truth? (3) How campers and leaders unite and respond, seeking to be Christians together.

Being Christian is more than saying the "word" or not saying it. It is meaning, acting, evaluating, being motivated by the awareness of God and his self-disclosure through Jesus Christ. This can and should happen anywhere. In Christian camping it happens in the adventure of living, playing, exploring, learning—while being related to other people and to the world around you.

ROBERT W. TULLY / Mr. Tully is Associate Professor in the Department of Recreation and Park Administration at Indiana University.



Six-man Conference Cabin from Site Selection and Development (copyright 1965, United Church Press).

Turn to the hills . .



BETSY ROSE / The giant fir boughs above the roof of the tent were all dripping in the dawn fog when, groaning and yawning, Phil roughly nudged or shook us out of our sleeping bags. I reluctantly wriggled out. Even though I'd worn my long jeans, cutoffs, two pairs of socks, a sweater, and a shirt to bed the night before, and had tied the hood of my sweatshirt tight under my chin, I shivered as I listened to the drip of the fog on the tarp. I felt for my soap; it was under Jan's boot, imbedded with dirt, and I couldn't find my towel. I shrugged into my raincoat—it wasn't very warm, but it was the only article of clothing that I wasn't already wearing. I stumbled down the hill to the lake. Jeff was starting a fire, and John, pumping his feet and rubbing his hands together, was urging, "Come on, Jeff, let's get that fire going." Anne was measuring Tang into a cooking can, and I grabbed three more cans to fill for breakfast. I splashed the icy lake water on my face. The sting of toothpaste woke me up. I filled the cans and scrambled back up the hill. Coffee was bubbling on the grate. Across the lake we saw smoke wisps from our other two camps, and we shouted good morning to them, our voices ringing clear in the cold air. The sun was





hitting the top of the mountain now, and soon the stunted alpine firs would throw small shadows across the lake.

As I stirred the oatmeal, we laughed about last year's trail camp. "Remember the night the tent fell down in the storm?" "Yeah, and how one of all we had for dinner was raisins because we couldn't get the fire going in the rain?"

The oatmeal was ready. We spooned it out of our tin dishes, hung up, chewing the bits of leaves and fir needles that had fallen into the cooking water. John lifted his pack off the branch where it had hung all night out of reach of camp robbers and bears, and got out his knife to butter the Melba toast. After a heated discussion on the virtues of blackberry jam versus marmalade, we began loading our packs. From down by the lake came the clatter of spoons and dishes, singing and grunting and splashing. On the hill sleeping bags were being flapped to air out, tarps were rolled up, and Dick was diving among crumpled clothes looking for the moleskin to patch up a blister before the day's hike.

Across the lake, the other two camps had loaded their packs, and we were straggling down the trail in bunches and pairs toward our camp for morning prayer. We met them on the other side of our hill. Spaced along the side of the trail, we squatted among the blueberry bushes, leaning on our

We needed each other in order to exist

acks and loosening our boot laces for the long climb while we waited for the
eise of the pebbles we'd pushed off the path with our boots to die away.

Mr. Bauck, our leader, read to us from Psalms, the worn words blending
with the sigh of the valley firs in the wind: "... he maketh me to lie down
green pastures. . . ." Sometimes the words were interwoven with the
ream of an eagle. "... he leadeth me beside the still waters . . . ," but
the thread of the passage was picked up again as the wind dropped. The
ow of polished heads bowed in meditation. The sun was warm on my neck,
and eddies of wind lifted my hair.

I thought of the day ahead; of the muddy trail where branches still wet
from the night's dew would slap against my face, of the frenzied attempts
of those at the front of the line to hush the rest of us when they caught
sight of a fan of elk spread across the valley. I wondered if I would get
lime fizzle in my lunch, and if I did, if I could trade it for some of Larry's
ail mix. I looked forward to making camp that night, and to being re-
eved of the weight of our group's dinner, which I was carrying. I hoped
that the stars would be out, and I remembered how they'd seemed to melt
in the lake last night when I'd skipped a flat stone across the water. I
remembered yesterday's sunset, and how we had seen Mt. Rainier far to
the south and the vague lights of cities. Cocoa in a tin cup burning both
our fingers and your tongue, and longing to follow the Gypsy Rover, like
the lady in the song. Building rafts, and the cold water seeping into the
furrows of your air mattress as the air slowly went out of it in the middle
of the lake, and flakes of freeze-dried carrots at the bottom of the lake by
where you washed the dishes.

These memories to me are trail camp, the ten-day backpacking trip to
Washington's Olympic Mountains sponsored by the Washington-North Idaho
Conference of the United Church of Christ, in which I participated for two
years.

Ten boys and ten girls, either entering juniors or seniors in high school,
or seniors who had just graduated, were selected for trail camp. After filling
out the conventional conference camp application, we were sent a question-
naire on our camping and hiking experience. Outdoors skills, interest, and
geographical distribution throughout the conference were the basis on
which trail campers were chosen.

We were required to bring our own equipment: A warm sleeping bag
and an air mattress (I soon learned that those I used for slumber parties
were very unsatisfactory when camped at 5000 feet elevation next to a
glacier), good hiking boots (even more important than a sleeping bag),
a lightweight pack, and eating utensils. By my second year of trail camp, I
had learned not to be particular about my trail camp attire; a T-shirt, an
old shirt, a pair of cutoffs and one of long jeans, a sweatshirt, a raincoat,

that trail camp will always be with me

and tennis shoes to wear in camp complete the latest trail camp wardrobe.


Food, mostly freeze-dried, and, incidentally, delicious, and community equipment such as tarps and cooking utensils, were divided among the campers. We were organized in three groups which facilitated cooking and setting up camp. Each group had two adult leaders.

Our routes, carefully scouted by the leaders in advance, were loop trips of about fifty miles. We followed a day-by-day itinerary, making camp at pre-determined sites. Pretty soon we learned to avoid the Forest Service shelters, which were usually besieged by Camp Fire girls, hunters, mice, or all three, by the time we straggled in—wet, tired, hungry, and in the first days of camp, usually several hours past sunset. Anyway, we usually succeeded in piecing together some pretty good tents out of tarps and rope, and the trees were the right distance apart, and if we didn't have to huddle under the tarp until the downpour stopped.

The memories, friendships, and understanding of myself and others that I gleaned from trail camp are a still vital part of me. The spontaneity that made trail camp unique in my camping experiences also made each year's trail camp a totally different experience from the one before. If you spilled the applesauce in the fire, and nobody had dessert that night, or if you'd just climbed 1000 feet from the floor of the valley where you'd camped the night before, and looking down, saw your knife at the bottom, glittering in the sun, nobody cared. We could have morning watch all day, if we wanted to. There was no schedule that said we had to discuss teen-age drinking between three and four, if we really wanted to catch frogs for stuffing sleeping bags instead.

We were one fabric, closely woven, yet giving with the moods and inclinations of each other: singing, learning, sharing. It is this spirit of community that is more than anything else a part of trail camp. Living out of our packs, involved only with the simplicity of survival, layers of inhibitions or posings that weren't really us were peeled away. Our leaders were one with us; they knew no more than we did whether the mice were going to get into the packs, or if it would be sunny. We were all interdependent on one another; we needed each other in order to exist. The ensuing bonds were as strong as those between friends of many years.

Even now, when I smell trout frying in onion flakes, or feel the mist of morning, or, most of all, hear the words of the "Gypsy Rover" and turn to the hills, I know that trail camp, my soulmates and my mountains, will always be with me.



BETSY ROSE / A former (1965) Creative Arts Award winner, Betsy Rose is now a freshman at Scripps College, Claremont, California.



WE
CALLED
IT
A
PICKLE-PICKING
LOVE
FEAST!



WILLARD DULABAUM / We had to admit that as a worship service it was like way out! Many of us felt it was far more meaningful than just going through the old routine. Others were less enthusiastic, and a few thought I fell just short of being sacrilegious.

What was this experience at Camp Mack in Indiana? What made it worshipful? It's quite a complicated story; but, if in our age we have learned to split the atom, we ought to be able to dissect this event. Right? Right! So, let's look at how it all came together.

From one direction, came the policy at Camp Mack conferences of having a project. The campers at a general session hear any suggestions worthy of being the camp project, and then pick one of these. Next comes debate on how to raise the money. Usually an offering is taken. Or, sometimes the campers have chosen to "fast" for one meal and direct the unused funds to the project.

From another direction, and past tradition, came the rather unique service which the Church of the Brethren calls the Love Feast. This is our version of the communion service. Instead of receiving only the bread and cup (the eucharist) in a morning service, the Love Feast is observed as a full service in itself, usually in the evening. It is actually a very literal following of what happened at the Last Supper. Because Jesus washed his disciples' feet, teaching them that even the Master must first of all be a servant, and calling them to be servants of others, the Brethren Love Feast begins with a service of footwashing. Non-Brethren find this service strange (and so do some Brethren). It is meant to be a teaching of humility and servanthood. And many feel this rite has a key role in keeping persons conscious of life's more common needs. The fellowship meal is the next step in the Love Feast. The fellowship is more often a quiet togetherness than vocal conversation, and the meal is geared more nearly to remembering the Upper Room experience than to filling the stomach, but it does a fair job of both. Finally, the bread and cup are taken much as in any denomination, but around tables.

Coming into our experience at Camp Mack from quite a different angle was the fact that migrant laws in 1965 caused a scarcity of farm laborers in Indiana. Near Camp Mack lay acres of cucumbers turning yellow with no one to harvest them.

And, to Camp Mack from still another trajectory came the discovery of young lady who needed help. Angelika Krischbin is a German girl, 21 years old, poised, pleasant, and a talented artist. But, she is a cripple confined to a wheelchair, diagnosed as a victim of muscular dystrophy. She had been assigned to a home for the aged—the only institution where she could receive care—and was discovered there by two youth working in Germany under Brethren Volunteer Service. The parents of one of them were able to bring her to this country. But diagnosis here did not brighten Angelika's hopes for the future, and it seemed best for her to return home. Before leaving, she made a stop-over in North Manchester, Ind., to visit friends and was hospitalized there following a car accident. But, everything turned out for the best, because the attending doctor took a special interest and saw signs of hope. Financial help was now needed to help send Angelika to Warm Springs, Ga., where it was hoped they might find the cause of her problem to be not muscular dystrophy but childhood polio.

This is where everything began to come together.

Helping Angelika was the first "nomination" for our project at Camp Mack. The dining hall became quiet. One fellow who had earlier raised his hand said he no longer had anything to suggest. Another one or two did likewise. Angelika's future became our project.

Next came the "how" debate. An offering sounded reasonable, but could we do more? Someone with an apparently wild orientation suggested we might all pick cucumbers. Discussion then centered on how we could do the Love Feast this year in a more meaningful way. Would we have the feet-washing service at the lakeside? This had been unique when tried before. But, we wondered if there were more modern ways to symbolize service and servanthood. One of the youthful-minded adult leaders then questioned whether picking cucumbers might also fit in at this point as the symbol of servanthood. Well, why not?—especially if it were done to serve someone in need. It "threw" us a minute, but it soon made more sense than anything else.

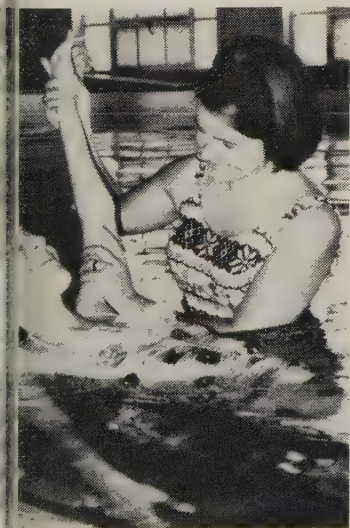
Thursday noon lunch was handled as usual except that an unusual expectancy filled the air. Following the meal we stayed in our places except to clean off the tables. The service of Love Feast was introduced and the worship began . . . in the dining hall!

For this Love Feast we took the bread and cup first, celebrating God's love to us made known in Christ. We broke and ate homemade loaves of bread around the table in memory of the One who lived as the Man for others . . . for us. Then, we went out to pick "pickles" so that one like us might have new life. We went out to work hard that we might truly be servants and experience sacrifice for others. Could this for us be worship?

For at least most of us it was! Oh, don't misunderstand me and think that no rotten cucumbers were thrown back and forth or that we didn't converse and laugh hilariously and sing. It was a lusty experience of working, sweating, and fellowship, but it was communion with a servant emphasis which we felt was very true to the old Brethren tradition, even though no one t



we went out to work
so another might have
new life . . . could this
for us be worship?



our knowledge had ever expressed it in quite this way before. The cucumber rows stretched nearly as far as we could see, further than we could go in one afternoon. But over 125 of us scattered out over the field, stretching muscles we never knew we had for a meagre 45 cents a bushel which we would personally never see. We discussed what it must be like to be a migrant.

The evening meal served as our fellowship meal, still a part of the service, and a fitting climax to the afternoon. It brought back into the fellowship some who were unable to go to the patch. We closed with an offering and the Doxology, ending on a note of praise.

As I said before, some thought it was the greatest! Some did not. But unlike most worship services, this one had some objective results which stood for all to see: Most of us had genuine communion in that cucumber patch. Along with our muscles we stretched our horizons about migrant workers, their labor, and their kind of life. We experienced servanthood. And we sent a check for \$411 to the Angelika Krischbin fund.

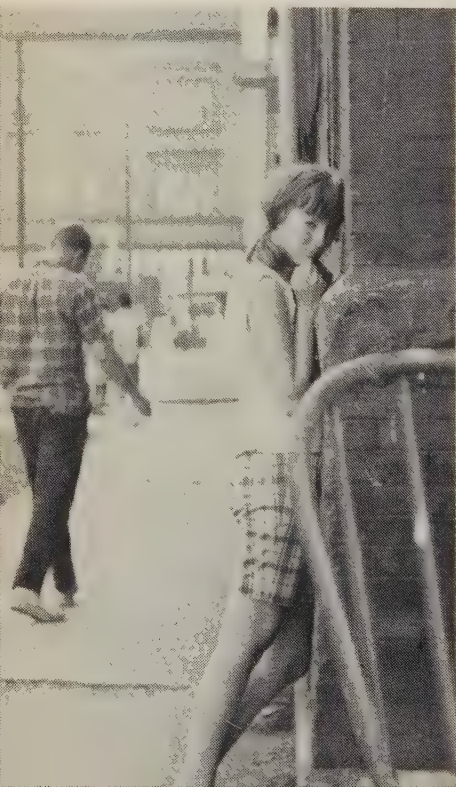
We worshiped, but we also helped Angelika to learn of brighter prospects for her future. Since then, we learn she has returned to her home with instructions for continuing therapy. Hardly any of the campers ever met her or ever will, but we have invested in her future. And she has likewise contributed to ours, for most of us will not soon forget our "pickle-picking Love Feast." ▼

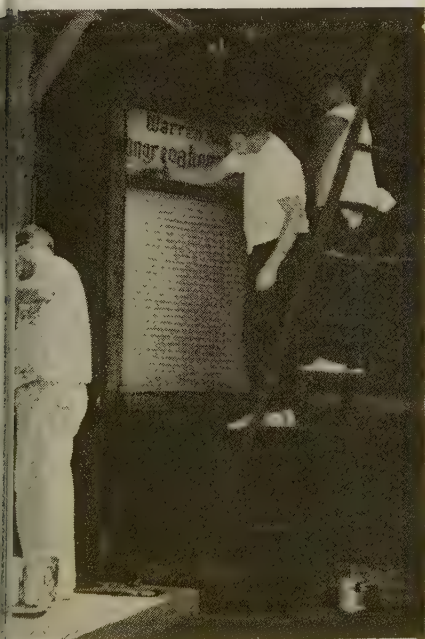
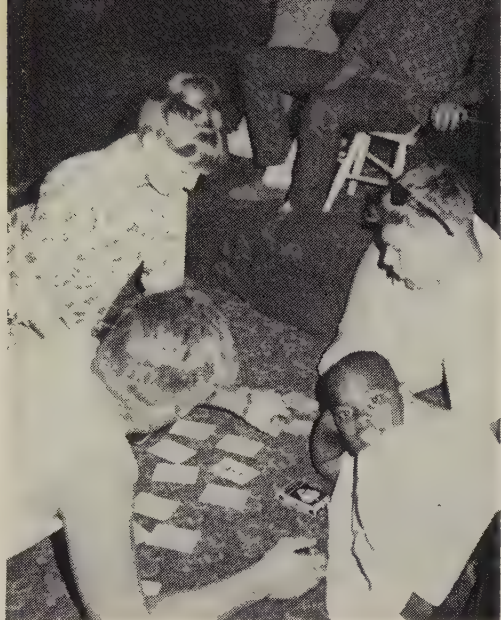
WILLARD E. DULABAUM / Mr. Dulabaum is pastor of the Ridgeway Community Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

OUR CHICAGO...

Last summer 22 senior highs from Iowa traveled to Chicago and spent two weeks working in an inner-city church and learning about the problems of the city. The teens and their three adult leaders worked, studied, participated in a civil rights march, and saw both the squalor and the glamour of Chicago. They lived, worked, and ate at the Warren Avenue United Church of Christ, doing their own cooking. In helping the church, they helped themselves to a new understanding of life in the city.

The London glass,
The dirty street
Shiny faces
Father of race,
Shuttling buses
Foggy nights
Blue sky, battles
Red lights, traffic
Paint and plaster
Sewing, machines,
Wool—Ray,
Black—White
What is it?
Chicago—
Our Chicago!





But people come in for this, and all of us may have been guilty of not keeping ourselves informed of the problems that face many of the people in the inner city. In fact many of us were completely unaware of what the inner city was like. But now, after having met Deb, Clarence, Mary, Sam, and heard them tell of the problems they have faced, we understand the problem is very real.

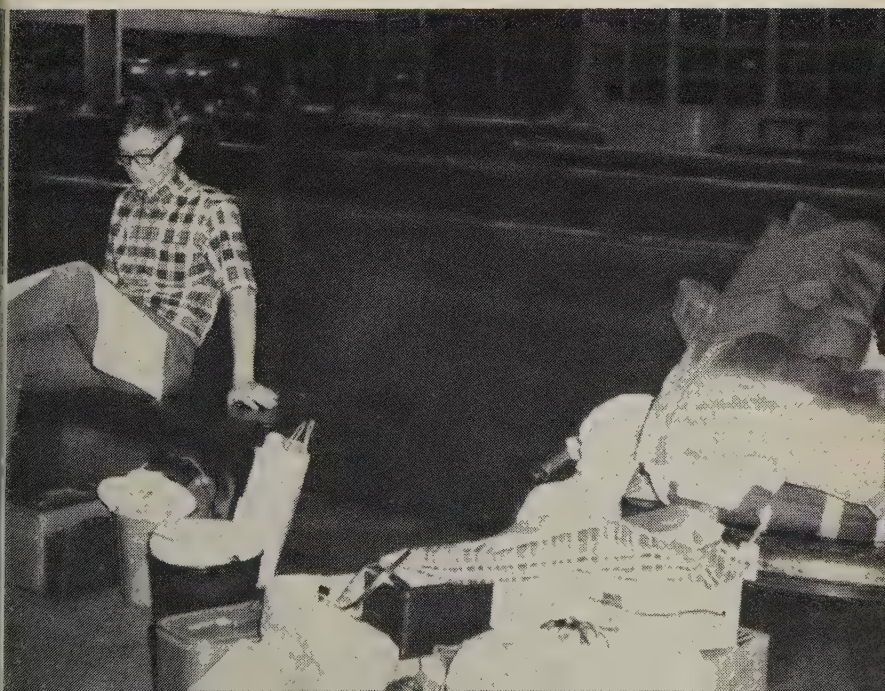
— [Name]



THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE
SCHOOL ARE VERY INTERESTED
IN THE STUDY OF THE
HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY
AND THE PEOPLE WHO
LIVED IN IT.



ey, Hey! What do you know
Bob Willis must go!
I don't
I don't
Why must he go?
So I see it is the right thing to do!
It who am I to question?
So crowds say he must
I'm unable to say
I feel as such a crowd
to have a common goal
But must we get the burden on one
man?
He has the right to say?





"I'm writing home to tell my mother about how the boy's camp is separated from our camp by a raging stream!"

CAN

"Didn't anybody bring food?!"



"I thought maybe we could sing choruses."

BY CHARLES SCHULZ



and we all were so... well, it was for the best... cms

canoeing / our baptism of fire

BY PAUL HEFFRON / I could tell on that first day that we had a good gang for what lay ahead: The way they threw themselves into the volleyball game as they arrived at the conference center and into the pool when the game was over; the way they sang to the strum of my guitar; the way they prepared that evening for the canoe trip they would begin the next morning. They were nine boys and six girls.

The campers had persuaded their parents to surrender them to the river. Actually, there was more danger on the highway traveling to Pilgrim Hill Conference Center than on the Mohican and Walhonding Rivers, but it was a departure from civilization. They knew they were in for a new and challenging adventure, and they were game.

A real canoe trip makes you a certain kind of group. You are faced with the tasks of surviving on the trail and creating a good life for yourselves. You soon become a group that rises to the occasion—or the jig is up. On this trip, we had three nights and two days of rain. We came through dry and comfortable. Only a group in which each can count on the others and be counted on can do that.



water . . .

A canoe trip puts you into a disciplined, responsible group, but it also makes you more free and uninhibited. It's immensely fun! At our first site, a fair maiden was liberally coated with shaving cream by a couple of her admirers. She took it all in good fun, but later it was her turn to put it over on them. She returned from a visit to a doctor with a tale which everybody swallowed—for everyone is as glibble as he is game on a river trip. (The river does it to you.) She told us that she had contracted a disease and that the medical authorities were going to quarantine all of us for eight days. The group's folk singers promptly went to work composing a song about this new plight, and interest in setting up camp dropped to a few low. Consequently, we cooked supper by lantern light, ate breakfast next day around noon, and had morning watch in the afternoon.

A canoe trip makes you an open and dynamic group. You live together on intimate terms. It's conducive to being open and honest with each other and sharing what's on your mind. At the same time, you get frustrated and fed up sometimes. When somebody goofs-up, it matters! Temper flares. You're too close together and your group life matters too much to gloss





we were out on the river for nine days...

over the conflicts. We had some tense moments. Remember, we had three boys for every two girls. We didn't resolve all our conflicts, but we dealt with them openly more than once.

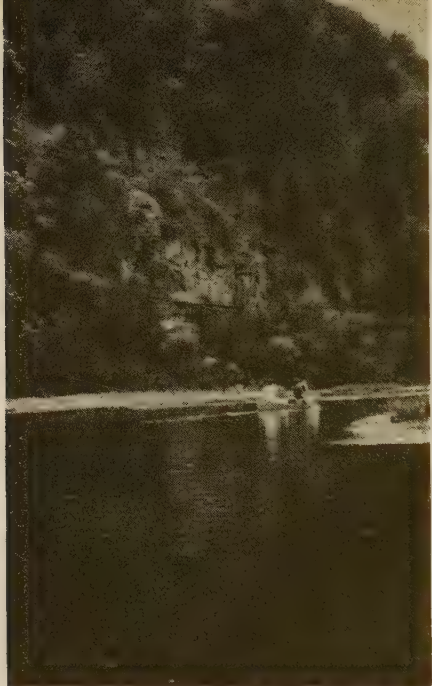
A canoe trip makes you serious and worshipful. The trip was jammed with experiences, and there were things to learn and ways to grow. We had some serious and meaningful discussions under the shade of a tree or by the light of a campfire. Sometimes these sessions were planned, more often they were spontaneous. Ours was an unusually good singing group. We knew all the folk songs, camp songs, and spirituals from memory. In fact, we didn't take any books or props for devotions or discussions along. The group and the trip itself offered more resources than we could ever exhaust. We sat around the fire at night and sang. Often our singing would naturally flow into a vesper. We would find ourselves singing devotion songs; somebody would express a thought and offer a prayer.

A canoe trip that is a church camp is not intrinsically different from one that isn't. It's a Christian experience because Christians bring their perspective to it. The aim of our trip was to see how well we could combine the



All photos from Paul Heffron





each canoe camper was church-oriented

Christian style of group life with the day-to-day life of a real canoe trip. We wouldn't have done to have used the canoe trip as a setting for various religious activities. We were on the river nine days. We paddled distances, built shelters, made natural toilets and garbage disposals, made our fireplaces, cooked and baked. We didn't have as many Bible studies, worship services, study-and-discussion sessions as you would at a conference center. The "curriculum" was the canoe trip. But the experience was not just one of having fun and learning some skills. We came to a new realization of what fellowship is, what worship is, what it is to be free and responsible. Our celebration of the Lord's Supper on our last night together was a celebration of the communion we knew on the trail.

This kind of canoe-trip church camping takes long-range as well as short-range preparation by staff and campers. The staff spent years gaining competence in camping and group leadership. The campers prepared in



"curriculum" was the experience itself

ng-range way by cultivating their interests in camping and outdoor sports and, by years of preparation in the church. Everyone brought something to the trip. Of course, we took something away from it, too—something that has made a difference in our personal lives and church preparation since. We have had a reunion since the trip and continue to write and visit.

If you are interested in canoe-trip church camping, it is not so important that you be an expert in canoeing and camping. It's more important that you participate in every way you can in the church—in worship, study, service, fellowship. A canoe trip isn't automatically a Christian experience, but can be one. It provides a kind of experience that can step-up the growth of a Christian person. It's a perfect setting for Christian group life. ▼

AUL HEFFRON / Mr. Heffron is the minister of the First Congregational Church (United Church of Christ) of Wauseon, Ohio.

Summertime and weekends anytime are change-of-pace times. But to make the most of such time creatively, you've got to plan ahead. In a few years, you'll be leaving home for college, or a job away from home, or the military service. Why not have one last fling with your family and try camping? Or you'd like to see the world without spending lots of money. Then try hosteling. Or look at your youth group at church—does it need a shot in the arm? Why not call for a retreat?

a mobile mom / a bike hike / a ponder oasis

The Times, London

FAMILY CAMPING / A growing number of families are taking to the road with their cars or trailers loaded with camping gear. It's an inexpensive way to travel, to sight-see, and to vacation. And you meet lots of interesting people wherever you go. And it's fun! Of course, camping out each night is not as comfortable as staying at a motel. And there's no loafing, for each member of the family is dependent on the other to do his or her part. But many families will testify with enthusiasm that such experiences do much to bring families together. The two big cautions are: Don't take too much gear, but enough! And don't go too far on your first trip—in fact, you ought to plan a dry run, perhaps even in your own back yard. Planning ahead is strategic! For more information, write: American Camping Association, Inc., Martinsville, Ind., 46151, or National Campers and Hikers Association, P.O. Box 276, 7172 Transit Road, Buffalo, N.Y. 14221.



American Youth Hostel, Inc.



HOSTELING / Riding on your lightweight bicycle with a minimum of equipment, you can see places of interest, meet other young people, keep in good physical shape, have fun, and not spend much money. It's rugged, but it's real. If you follow the hosteling trails, you will find overnight lodging at inexpensive hotels at convenient locations. An American Youth Hostel trip is conducted at a leisurely pace and in an economical manner. An average cycling day is 35 miles. Station wagon groups cover about 200 miles on traveling days. Trains, buses, boats or station wagons are used to cover long distances. If you are 15 years old by July 1, you are eligible for all trips in the U.S. and Canada. Those aged 16 by July 1 are eligible for the special high school European trips. Applicants for all other trips must be 17. For more information, write: American Youth Hostels, 14 West 8th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011.



Paul S. Buck



RETREATS / It takes time to explore significant ideas in depth. Time is always too short in the Sunday morning church school class or even with the evening fellowship group. So, why not try an occasional week-end retreat? Find a place where your group can get away from the normal routine. Start on a Friday night and run it through Saturday evening or Sunday afternoon. Schedule plenty of time for thinking and discussion, as well as some free time for relaxation and fun and informal talk with your leaders. Maintain the serious intent of the retreat by the relevance of the topic you select, by the demands you make on each participant before and during the retreat, and by the sincerity with which you dig into your discussions. Have some key adult leaders to stimulate thinking by appropriate questions, to listen sympathetically, and to share of their own experience and thought. Recreation is secondary; group and personal probing—spiritually and intellectually—is primary.



The Times, London

Let us try to find a definition for "religious event." Get beyond the description of your confirmation or that campfire on the lakeside during the summer camp. It gave you the creeps, and the stars looked like angels' eyes—but was it a religious experience?

Or take the other thing. Remember those weeks when you tried really hard? You prayed like mad; you made up your mind never again to do well, not to do those things they always say are wrong. Was that a "religious experience"?

Or did Peter have one during the washing of his feet? When there was nothing religious to be experienced, but only a man who stooped down and washed his ugly feet.

Religious events and experiences in the Bible are as precise as the stories about God are. They are not psychological, but social; they don't take place in holy places, but where a job needs doing.

—Albert van den Heuvel from POW
(January-March, 1966). Used by
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